

**The Faction Paradox Protocols,  
Volume One:  
"The Eleven-Day Empire"**

by  
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(15/04/00)

**CHARACTER NOTES**

**The Principals**

**1. Cousin Justine.** Main protagonist. Faction Paradox recruit. Young, probably early twenties. Recruited from nineteenth-century England, and it shows. Polite. Demure. Tends to be overly formal, and therefore an unusual candidate for a time-travelling voodoo cult. Probably quite uncertain about her new role in life. Nineteenth-century upbringing means that she's ashamed and embarrassed by the fact that she comes from a family of witches, even though it's the reason the Faction's interested in her. Actually capable of being quite aggressive, but only when she's sure of what she's doing. At the moment, she isn't.

**2. Godfather Morlock.** Elder statesman of Faction Paradox. Age uncertain, but late fifties at least. Domineering personality, though considered by the rest of the Faction to be as mad as a duck. A bit like the token eccentric professor at Oxford. Remains to be seen whether he's

*Let's be honest: it's the stupid questions in life that get the best answers. For example, here's some history for you. See what you make of it.*

*On September the fourteenth, 1752, the English lost eleven days out of their calendar. It had to happen, sooner or later. England's calendar was eleven days out from the rest of Europe, so the great thinkers of the day... that'll be the philosophers and the civil servants, you know the type... they decided to put the date forward by a week and a half. The people went to bed on September the second, and when they woke up it was the fourteenth. Simple. So, the obvious question - the stupid question - is: what happened to the missing eleven days?*

*Those great thinkers I mentioned probably wouldn't have had an answer to that, which is a shame, because the answer's this. The missing days were taken by Faction Paradox.*

*Well, that's not really a big surprise, is it? Out of all the Great Houses... the Great Houses being the ones who've made it their business to look after space-time in general, the ones who've insisted on running history behind the scenes since before us poor human sods crawled up out of the oceans... out of all the Great Houses, Faction Paradox was the only one that really knew how to step over the line. I mean, while the others were all busy with their time machines and their nice shiny bits of technology, the Faction was busy calling on the spirits of eternal darkness and sacrificing raw virgins, just for a laugh. So when the Faction's people got themselves thrown out of polite society and kicked off the old homeworld, they needed somewhere else to set up shop. Which is why they took those eleven days out of English history, and locked them in a little bubble of time outside of the rest of the universe, where almost nobody else could get at it.*

*And of course, that was where we all lived. In the Eleven-Day Empire. In a little ghost-city that - back in the real world - would have been called London. In a timezone all to ourselves, where the buildings were made out of shadows and the sky was the colour of blood twenty-four hours a*

*day. Cut off from the other Houses, and cut off from the rest of history, at least until the elders needed to pop out and recruit some new family members from the universe outside.*

*So. Think of this story as the answer to a stupid question. The story of Faction Paradox, the story of the Eleven-Day Empire, but most of all the story of a girl who called herself Justine. Just one of a thousand little Cousins who'd been drafted into the family estate.*

*Justine's the important one here. Try to keep that in mind.*

**F/X:** The chimes of Big Ben, some way in the distance. There's no city noise in the background, maybe just the sound of a faint wind blowing up.

**ELIZA [if possible, F/X should suggest that this is a voice-over rather than an actual presence in the scene]:** This is where it starts, pretty much. With poor little Justine, all on her own, sent out to the edge of the city where nobody ever goes. Nobody human, anyway. Because, let's not kid ourselves, there were things living in the Eleven-Day Empire even *before* the Faction settled down there..

**F/X:** Eventually, the chimes of Big Ben fall silent.

**JUSTINE [calling out]:** Hello?

**F/X:** Background noise continues. No response to Justine.

**JUSTINE [calling out]:** You can hear me, I hope. I was sent by the House. They'd like... we'd like your counsel. If it's convenient. **[Pause.]** Here.

**F/X:** Something soft and soggy slapping against the floor. The sound of Justine emptying something out of a sack.

**JUSTINE:** They told me I should bring meat...

**F/X:** Suddenly, there's a great flapping in the air. The sound of huge wings beating, drawing closer. Whatever it is, there's more than one of them..

**JUSTINE [slightly taken aback]:** Oh.

**F/X:** The beating of wings gets louder, then slows down. The wings continue to make shuffling noises throughout this scene.

**JUSTINE [uncertain]:** Good morning. You must be the Unkindnesses. I trust I'm not inconveniencing you... gentlemen? **[No response; she clears her throat.]** My name is Jus... my name is *Cousin* Justine. I've come here on behalf of Faction Paradox. From Parliament.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Future.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Faction wants the future. Little Cousin wants the future. Yes?

**JUSTINE:** We understand... I mean, I've been told...

**UNKINDNESS 2:** We know the future. Little Cousin Justine. Little witch-Cousin.

**JUSTINE:** I beg your pardon?

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Meat. Give us meat.

**JUSTINE:** Yes, of course. It's here.

**F/X:** The flapping of the Unkindnesses becomes a little more excited..

**JUSTINE:** It's still on the, ahh... on the carcass. I understand that's the way you like it.

**UNKINDNESS 3:** Meat. Need meat.

**JUSTINE:** It's a dodo. They're very rare.

**UNKINDNESS 3:** Dodo?

**JUSTINE:** From the eighteenth century. I... we thought you'd like it.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Dodo. Death-bird.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Extinction-totem.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Says more about you than about us. Little Cousin.

**JUSTINE:** What do you mean?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** You want us to tell you. Tell you the future.

**JUSTINE:** We understand you have certain powers. Yes.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Think you know the future already, little witch-Cousin. Think you already see it. Death and extinction. *You* chose dodo to bring us. Little witch-Cousin already knows.

**JUSTINE [bristling]:** Please stop calling me that. I'm not a witch.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** No? Maybe little Cousin has witch-flesh on her bones. Maybe this is why the Faction takes her in.

**JUSTINE [primly]:** I came here as a representative of my House. What kind of flesh I have is none of your business.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Dodo-flesh. We like your dodo-flesh.

**UNKINDNESS 3:** Rip it. Rip it open.

**F/X:** Nibbling, chewing noises from the Unkindnesses (i.e. the actors can do this themselves). Should sound as unpleasant as possible. This goes on for a while.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** There. The future. See it?

**JUSTINE:** You mean... the entrails? The entrails of the bird? Is that what I'm supposed to be looking at?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Not entrails. Food. Food for the future. Look.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry. I don't know anything about fortune-telling. You'll have to explain it to me.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Lying.

**JUSTINE:** What?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** You know, little Cousin. You see it too.

**JUSTINE [frostily]:** I see. Well, obviously we're wasting each others' time. You evidently don't have anything to tell the House, so if you'll excuse me -

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Empire falling.

**JUSTINE [shocked pause]:** What did you say?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Empire in flames. Falling. Burning.

**JUSTINE:** You mean... *our* Empire? The House?

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Ladybird. Ladybird. Fly away home. Your house is on fire. Your children are gone.

**JUSTINE:** You're not making any sense -

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Shh! Listen. Listen.

**F/X:** The Unkindnesses quieten down, not shuffling and flapping as much as they were. In the background, we become aware of a new sound. It's distant, but it sounds like shellfire. There's the impression of explosions. The noise becomes more pronounced as we listen to it.

**JUSTINE [shocked]:** That noise -

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Ladybird, ladybird.

**UNKINDNESS 3:** Fly away home.

**JUSTINE:** It's coming from Parliament. Something's happening in Parliament.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Empires falling.

**JUSTINE:** Are we being attacked? Is that what you were trying to say?

**F/X:** The noise gets louder; the explosions aren't getting closer, but there are more of them.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Fly. Fly away.

**JUSTINE:** Yes. Yes, of course. You, ah... you're not going to eat the dodo?

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Eat? Dodo?

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Never.

**UNKINDNESS 3;** Not kosha. Disgusting.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Fly away Justine. Fly away.

**Fade.**



**F/X:** The same background noise of shellfire-and-explosions we heard before, but now much, much closer. There's also the occasional energy-weapon discharge. We get the impression that we've changed scene, that we're now right in the middle of the barrage: If possible, we should make this sound a little muffled, to suggest that we're hearing this from inside a building. To add to this impression, we hear the sound of footsteps hurriedly crossing a floor.

**ELIZA [in the background]:** Godfather? **[Getting closer.]** Godfather Morlock? Are you okay?

**MORLOCK:** Hmm. Well, my body temperature's ninety-eight-point-six, my pulse is up to a hundred and thirty per minute, and I've got a slight touch of gastric enteritis, but other than that I seem to be in one piece. As well as can be expected, under the circumstances.

**ELIZA [a bit surprised by all this]:** Oh. Right.

**MORLOCK:** Never ask a doctor how he is, Cousin Eliza. You'll receive an answer in tedious detail. Are you aware, for example, that you've breathed in exactly twenty-nine times since you came in? You'll hyperventilate, if you're not careful.

**ELIZA:** Yeah, well, we're kind of under attack here -

**MORLOCK:** Thankyou, Cousin, but I was aware of that. The view's quite spectacular. Come and stand here, you can even see the markings on the attack craft.

**ELIZA:** Look, we can't stay here. The tower's too big a target, they'll be -

**MORLOCK:** The tower, Eliza, has already survived a good two-hundred years of abuse. It has in the *real* London, anyway, and I don't see why our version should be any different. I rather think it'll take more than

this to bring Big Ben crashing down around our ears. Tell me, how's the rest of the city? Or are they just attacking Parliament?

**ELIZA [hurriedly]:** The city centre. Trafalgar Square's gone. They just came out of nowhere and started shooting. Look, if we don't get out of here -

**MORLOCK:** Curious, isn't it? Who'd want to attack our little eleven-day world, I wonder?

**ELIZA:** Well... I don't know. One of the other Houses, probably. Listen -

**MORLOCK:** One of the other Houses. You'd think that, wouldn't you? You'd think they'd be the only ones who could get into the Empire in the first place. But I've never seen a House use attack craft like those. Very crude. Very crude indeed. Great leaden lumpy things. What about the statue?

**ELIZA:** Statue?

**MORLOCK:** The statue of the Grandfather. In Trafalgar Square. What happened to it?

**ELIZA:** It's gone. It's all gone.

**MORLOCK:** Pity. Always rather liked it. You know... it's almost like seeing a corpse being dissected.

**ELIZA [thrown by all of this]:** What is?

**MORLOCK:** Watching the attack from up here. Seeing it through the glass of the clock-face. Just look. The numbers on the dial. The way they cut the landscape into twelve neat little segments. The way they divide up the attack. It's like some sort of anatomical diagram. The precision of it all...

still, I don't suppose that's my department, is it? I presume Godfather Sabbath's already rounding up the troops for the big counter-assault.

**ELIZA:** He's organizing the flying machines. I'm supposed to be getting ready, he only sent me here to make sure you weren't... I mean, he was worried about you.

**MORLOCK:** And is Cousin Justine back yet?

**ELIZA:** Justine? What's Justine got to do with anything?

**MORLOCK:** It's a simple enough question. And don't look out through the glass while you're giving me your answer. There's an attack vehicle on a collision course with the tower, and I think it might distract you.

**ELIZA:** Oh God.

**F/X:** Monster explosion from outside.

**MORLOCK:** Hmm. Blew up just in the nick of time. One-point-six seconds later, and it would've hit us. Looks like Sabbath's got his forces mobilized already.

**ELIZA:** Listen, I'm supposed to be with them. They told me to make sure you -

**MORLOCK:** To make sure I'm not senile enough to stand here talking while the enemy takes the building to pieces. I appreciate the effort. Now, you'd better be getting along, hand't you?

**ELIZA:** You're staying here?

**MORLOCK:** Don't worry about me just yet, Cousin. It'll be at least four-and-a-half minutes before any of them even scratch the clocktower.

**ELIZA:** How do you know?

**MORLOCK:** Oh, I know a thing or two about anatomical diagrams. Goodbye, Eliza.

**Fade.**

**GRAMS:** Background music.

**VOICE:** Reconstruction number one. Second day Faction Paradox briefing, as given by Godfather Morlock.

**MORLOCK:** Now, observe this armour. As new members of our family, this is the uniform you'll be expected to wear on ceremonial occasions, or, heaven forbid, if you ever have to go into real-life combat. It's the best protection you're ever likely to possess, and I should know, because I designed most of it. I'm sure you'll all have noticed the hardwired biokinetic system and the airtight layer of artificial membrane, while the more observant among you might also have spotted that the armour's framework looks a lot like bone. There's a reason for that, of course. It's because the whole suit's made out of a skeleton. You don't need to know what it was the skeleton *of*, but let's just say that if you run into something that's six foot three and covered in chitinous plating then you might want to think about leaving the room before it notices you're wearing one of its ancestors. It's enough to know that these are the bones of one of the toughest humanoid species known to the family, and if sympathetic magic's what it used to be then some of that strength should rub off on you. **[Pause.]** Of course, now you'll be asking yourselves the obvious question. If these things are so tough, then how did we manage to kill them for their skeletons in the first place? Not that I want to reduce your confidence in your armour.

**F/X:** The war-noise grows louder, so we gather we're outside. We hear the sound of running footsteps on the ground.

**ELIZA [approaching]:** Justine!

**JUSTINE [out of breath]:** Cousin. What's happening?

**ELIZA:** Christ knows. Nobody's got a clue who they are. One minute everything's fine, the next minute the sky opens up and we're getting shot at.

**JUSTINE:** The sky...?

**ELIZA [hurried]:** They were just *there*. Don't ask me. Sabbath's told everyone who's got flight training to... do you need help with that armour?

**JUSTINE:** Please. The catch at the back, I can't quite...

**ELIZA:** Hold still. Sabbath's told everyone with flight training to get into the air. I think he means us as well.

**JUSTINE:** Your flying machine's working again?

**ELIZA:** Pretty much. Back wings are still a bit dodgy, but it lands okay. God, this catch is stiff. There, you're all done.

**F/X:** Big explosion from somewhere nearby.

**ELIZA:** Getting closer. We'd better get going. Sabbath says we've got to hold them off until he's... did you just cross yourself?

**JUSTINE:** Look.

**ELIZA:** What?

**JUSTINE:** The sky. Look at the sky.

**F/X:** A new sound, a great, deep, whining noise, like the gates of heaven scraping open. It's quite subtle when it starts, but gets louder until it almost blots out the sounds of battle. (NB: This noise is going to be used

quite a lot from now on, so this is the one big effect we should concentrate on getting right.)

**ELIZA:** Oh, bloody hell.

**F/X:** Muffled background noise, meaning that we're inside again. The sky-opening sound continues to build.

**MORLOCK:** Mmm. Opening up time like a cat-flap. Must be the main thrust of the attack coming through.

**F/X:** The whine reaches its crescendo, and ends in a huge roaring sound. An engine, but an enormous one.

**MORLOCK:** Ah. The inevitable mothership. Let's see. Eighty metres long, about, what, forty metres around the middle, thirteen heavy weapons units along each side... yes, I think I'd call it a warship. Time to withdraw, I think.

**F/X:** Outside, so the roaring gets louder again. The battle continues, shellfire and energy discharges zigzagging across the stereo picture. In the "foreground", we hear wings flapping; a more controlled sound than that made by the Unkindness (but sod it, we can use the same effect at a slightly different pitch). In this scene, both Justine and Eliza have to raise their voices to be heard over the din.

**ELIZA:** You're doing it again, aren't you?

**JUSTINE:** What?

**ELIZA:** Crossing yourself.

**JUSTINE:** That ship... it's so *big*...

**ELIZA:** Justine... shut up, all right? I'm trying not to look down.

**JUSTINE:** The ship, Eliza. It's like an airship. Like Jules Verne.

**F/X:** A brief energy burst from nearby.

**ELIZA:** Ow!

**JUSTINE:** Are you all right?

**ELIZA:** God knows. I'm not looking.

**JUSTINE:** It's even got portholes. Just like in the books.

**ELIZA:** They're not portholes. They're launching-tubes.

**JUSTINE:** Pardon?

**ELIZA:** It's a warship. It's got tubes for landing pods. That means they're -

**F/X:** A prolonged energy burst nearby.

**ELIZA:** Damn. Pull the wings up.

**JUSTINE:** What?

**ELIZA:** *Pull the wings up!*

**F/X:** A long burst of fire. It sounds like there's a lot of enemy vessels around.

**ELIZA [under her breath]:** Oh *God*...

**JUSTINE:** Turn! Turn!

**ELIZA:** I'm trying!

**F/X:** More fire. The droning of the warship's engine gets louder.

**ELIZA:** It's no good! We're going to hit the warship, I can't -

**JUSTINE:** The portholes!

**ELIZA:** They're not portholes!

**JUSTINE:** It doesn't matter! Head inside the warship, we can try to board it!

**F/X:** The droning gets louder still. The warship's very, very close now.

**ELIZA:** If there's launching pods in those tubes -

**JUSTINE:** Up!

**ELIZA:** I know!

**F/X:** The drone is so loud, it blots out all other sound. Then, abruptly, it ends. Although we can still hear the noise of battle, it suddenly seems a long way away, and there's a distinct echo to it; we're inside one of the warship's launching-tubes. As the wings of Eliza's flying-machine slow down and reach a standstill, Eliza stops screaming. All goes quiet, apart for the background noise from outside.

**JUSTINE [after a pause]:** Cousin?

**ELIZA:** I suppose you think this is an achievement, don't you?

**JUSTINE:** It's all right. We're safe. We're inside the... launching-tube. **[Pause.]** Look. You can see the battle from here. All the weapons they're using...



**ELIZA:** There aren't any landing pods.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry?

**ELIZA:** No landing pods. Just an airlock into the rest of the ship. So that means they're not going to be sending any ground-troops down.

**JUSTINE:** Eliza, look! The others are doing the same thing. They're all flying into these... tubes.

**ELIZA:** Sabbath's really getting a kick out of this. You can tell. So, what do we do now?

**JUSTINE:** We go inside. It's our duty.

**ELIZA:** Thought you might say that. Any ideas how to open the airlock?

**JUSTINE:** It doesn't open?

**ELIZA:** Not from this side. Nobody's meant to come in this way.

**JUSTINE:** Wait.

**ELIZA:** What?

**JUSTINE [whispering under her breath, as if praying]:** Bloodline to bloodline, in constant transition. Our pattern, our flesh, and our one restoration.

**ELIZA:** What are you doing?

**JUSTINE [still whispering]:** Conception, completion, the will of the city. The Grandfather watch me. The Grandfather know me..

**ELIZA:** You don't seriously think that's going to work, do you?

**F/X:** Airlock door hums open.

**ELIZA [after a pause]:** You shouldn't have been able to do that.

**JUSTINE [formally]:** Grandfather watch me. Spirits maintain me.

**ELIZA [under her breath]:** Whatever.

**F/X:** Outside. The roar of the warship still fills the air, and the energy discharges are more frequent than ever. Then, after a few seconds, there's a new sound. It's a voice, broadcast over some kind of PA system.

**GENERAL KINE [over PA]:** Attention. Attention all subjects of the Eleven-Day Empire. This is the only warning you will receive. This area is now under our jurisdiction. The organization known as Faction Paradox no longer holds authority over this city-state. Any resistance will be destroyed with maximum force. We repeat: maximum force.

**F/X:** Inside the ship again. The sound of Justine's footsteps on the hard floor. We can vaguely hear the sound of fighting outside, and the muffled sound of the PA message.

**SONTARAN VOICE [PA, outside]:** Your lives are under our command. There will be no further opportunity to surrender. There will be no further message.

**JUSTINE [to herself, under her breath]:** Conception, completion, the will of the city. The Grandfather see me. The Grandfather know me.

..

**F/X:** An energy discharge, but inside the ship. Some form of hand-weapon.

**SONTARAN [in the distance, i.e. at the other end of a corridor]:**  
Stay where you are!

**JUSTINE:** Oh.

**SONTARAN:** You will not offer any resistance. You are a prisoner of war, and can be executed at my discretion.

**JUSTINE:** Good day, sir. As you can see, I'm not carrying any weapon.

**SONTARAN [getting closer]:** Raise your hands.

**JUSTINE:** As you say, sir.

**SONTARAN:** You are wearing armour. You will remain still while your armour is scanned for counter-offensive technology. Failure to comply will result in your termination.

**JUSTINE:** You're also wearing armour, sir. May I inspect yours?

**SONATARN [close by now]:** You will not argue!

**JUSTINE [formally]:** My name is Justine. I am a Cousin of the House, and the House is my Faction. I am sworn to uphold the protocols of my family -

**SONATARAN:** Your name and rank are not required!

**JUSTINE:** - and to devote my efforts to the service of the bloodline, in the name of the Grandfather and by the will of the spirits. My name is Justine -

**SONATARAN:** Silence!

**JUSTINE [determined]:** - and I am of the family blood. I am of House Paradox -

**SONATARN:** You will be silent!!

**JUSTINE [increasingly aggressive]:** - and the blood that runs in me is my family's blood, and the blood of my House -

**SONTARAN:** *You will be silent!*

**JUSTINE [reaching a climax]:** - and you do *not* know me.

**F/X: [Editor's note (2003): This is the first time we hear the sound of Justine's shadow-weapon. In fact the sound isn't described properly in the finished script, since the scene in which it was supposed to be used for the first time was cut from the final draft. So here it's just referred to as...] ...a brief howling, swooshing noise, again ending with a big wet impact. Then silence.**

**ELIZA [far end of the corridor]:** Justine?

**F/X:** Eliza's footsteps as she hurries up the corridor.

**JUSTINE [whispering]:** Grandfather watch me. Spirits maintain me.

**ELIZA:** What happened?

**JUSTINE:** I... dispatched it.

**ELIZA:** Why didn't it just shoot you?

**JUSTINE:** It didn't think I was dangerous. Our weapons are invisible to them. They don't know us at all.

**ELIZA:** Yeah, well, they know us enough to get into the city. Hang on, let me get its helmet off. **[Sundry struggling noises.]** Got it. It's a Sontaran.

**JUSTINE:** You know them?

**ELIZA:** Marauder species. Big guns. Big heads. Like getting into fights.

**JUSTINE:** Do they have a House?

**ELIZA:** Don't think so. They're... what do you call them... homunculi. Clones. They like nicking bits of time-technology off the Houses.

**JUSTINE:** So they came here on a raiding mission.

**ELIZA:** Probably. Let's leave the details until later, okay?

**F/X:** We start to make out the sounds of fighting from nearby. Fighting on board the warship, this time. Sontaran handguns being fired, and the *swoosh* of Faction weaponry. Shouts from both sides.

**JUSTINE:** It's the others. Godfather Sabbath. They've boarded.

**F/X:** Sudden gunfire, cutting right across the stereo picture. Someone shooting at Justine and Eliza. Eliza cries out.

**SONTARAN [down the corridor]:** You have one chance to surrender. You will consider yourselves prisoners of war.

**JUSTINE:** Ready?

**ELIZA:** When you are.

**F/X:** The *swoosh* of Faction weapons, whatever they may be. This time, we can hear both Justine's and Eliza's.

**F/X:** Outside. The roar of the warship overhead, still interrupted by shelling and energy discharges. Footsteps on gravel in the foreground, almost drowned out by the noise.

**SONTARAN VOICE [P.A.]:** Any attempts to board this vessel will be met with maximum force. All resistance will be quashed.

**MORLOCK [foreground]:** Oh dear. Doesn't sound like it's going very well for you, does it?

**F/X:** Unexpectedly, the sound of the warship changes pitch.

**MORLOCK:** Ah. Retreating, I see. Knew it wouldn't last.

**F/X:** Back on board the warship. The sounds of melee, as two Faction weapons slice their way through the Sontaran hordes. There are occasional bursts of gunfire, but mostly we just hear Sontaran grunts and mumbles while Justine and Eliza hold them off.

**ELIZA [over the sounds of battle]:** Head back!

**JUSTINE:** We're not far from the others. We can join up with Godfather Sabbath -

**ELIZA:** I told you, didn't I? They're Sontarans. They're clones, they get churned out by the million. There's got to be hundreds of them here, we can't fight them all. Get back. Back to the flyer.

**F/X:** The fighting continues for a few moments; then the quality of the sound changes, as they move from the corridor of the warship into the launching-tube (with echo).

**ELIZA:** Can you close the airlock? Like you opened it?

**JUSTINE [prayer]:** Bloodline to bloodline, in constant transition -

**F/X:** Airlock door hum.

**JUSTINE:** - yes.

**ELIZA:** They can open it from their side.

**JUSTINE:** No they can't.

**ELIZA:** Fine. Let's get the flyer working.

**F/X:** Slowly, the flyer begins to flap its wings. It doesn't sound as strong as it did before.

**JUSTINE:** We're moving.

**ELIZA:** I bloody hope so.

**JUSTINE:** No, the warship's moving. Can't you feel it?

**F/X:** The whining starts again, the sound of the sky opening.

**ELIZA [alarmed]:** It's leaving. They're taking their ship back out of time.

**JUSTINE:** If we can track them back to their home -

**ELIZA:** Justine... let's just get out of here, all right?

**F/X:** Outside. The whining intensifies, as before. The firing dies down. Over the cacophony of the warship's departure, we hear a faint flapping, which gradually gets louder and louder. The flyer is getting "nearer" to us. Eventually, we can hear the voices of Justine and Eliza over the noise.

**ELIZA:** Keep the wings steady! For God's sake, just keep the wings steady!

**JUSTINE:** They're not working!

**ELIZA:** *What did you say?*

**JUSTINE:** They're not flapping... Eliza, the sky...

**ELIZA:** It's not the bloody sky that's the trouble, is it? It's the ground!

**JUSTINE:** It's opening again!

**F/X:** The whine reaches maximum intensity as the warship grinds its way out of time. Soon, we can't hear anything over the noise; no engines, no firing, no explosions. As the din reaches a climax, the only thing we can make out is Eliza shouting.

**ELIZA:** Hold on!

**F/X:** One moment of total noise. Then complete silence.

**Fade.**

**GRAMS:** Background music.

**VOICE:** Reconstruction number two. From the private confessional of Cousin Justine.

**JUSTINE:** I don't intend to argue. It's not in my nature to be disobediant, certainly not to Godfather Morlock. But I don't understand. I don't understand why I haven't already been punished. **[Pause.]** I was sent on a mission once before. Shortly after I became a Cousin. The nature of the mission isn't something I wish to dwell on, but... I failed in my duty. I've been assured that it wasn't my fault, that it was the other Houses who sabotaged matters, but a failure is still a failure, surely? Father Sanjira... he was my guardian, when I first joined the family... Father Sanjira failed in his duty as well, and he died for that failure. He sacrificed himself to the spirits. I told Godfather Morlock this, and he informed me that the Faction



doesn't kill its children for making mistakes. If the spirits told Father Sanjira to kill himself, then he must have *wanted* to die. He must have secretly desired his punishment. But I still don't understand. The Godfather tells me failure is good, and that we need failure in order to learn, but... if we punish ourselves for our mistakes, and only if we want to be punished, then will I destroy myself too? **[Another pause.]** I don't think I understand what the House sees in me. Unless it just wants my blood.

**F/X:** Squelching noises. Like somebody poking around inside a corpse with a scalpel. Which is, in fact, exactly what's happening.

**MORLOCK [apparently to himself]:** Further note on the structure of the biodata. Despite being two-million years old, signs of the subject's birth-trauma are still evident in its timeline. Suggests there might be some value in expanding Freudian theory into four dimensions. Question for later: whether Oedipus complexes make themselves manifest in the timeline as well as in the subconscious. Must examine the point in a higher primate.

**JUSTINE [background, clears her throat]:** Godfather?

**MORLOCK:** Justine. I was wondering where you'd got to. Excuse me, I was just in the middle of a dissection. What do you think?

**JUSTINE [coming forward]:** About the dissection?

**MORLOCK:** Fascinating, isn't it? Most of my work these days is based on autopsy. Ever used a tracking-knife?

**JUSTINE:** No, Godfather. It's not really -

**MORLOCK:** Oh, you'd be surprised. These days, we can do more than just dissect the tissue. We can cut right into the subject's timeline. We can autopsy them in all four major dimensions. Dissect their pasts, presents, and possible futures under the knife. Here. Would you like to try it?

**JUSTINE [too quickly]:** No. I mean... I don't...

**MORLOCK:** Don't like dealing in entrails?

**JUSTINE:** No, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** Strange. I seem to remember a time when you had a pathological attraction to dead things. Couldn't tear you away from them.

**JUSTINE:** I'm over that now. Thankyou.

**MORLOCK:** Well. I hope you don't mind me finishing off before I give you my full attention. I'm dissecting a South American missing link, and I'd hate to have to break off now.

**F/X:** More squelching noises throughout the next section.

**MORLOCK:** The Unkindnesses do exactly the same thing I'm doing, of course. Examine a subject's timeline via the flesh. Look into the future through the guts of the dead. Of course, in the case of the Unkindnesses, the power's inherent. I'd love to dissect one of them, one of these days. Not that I suppose there's much chance of that. I'm told they eat their own dead. So, what do you have to report?

**JUSTINE [formally]:** I met the Unkindnesses, as instructed. I gave them flesh, taken from your catalogue.

**MORLOCK:** And what kind of flesh did you choose?

**JUSTINE:** I gave them... dodo.

**MORLOCK:** Very apt. So, you gave the Unkindnesses the meat. Then they told you about the future, and said there was going to be some kind of great catastrophe. The Eleven-Day Empire falling, the city in flames, etcetera etcetera.

**JUSTINE:** You know?

**MORLOCK:** Of course I know. I'd already reached the same conclusions myself. I just wanted a second opinion. And I think *you'd* noticed it too, hadn't you, Justine?

**JUSTINE:** I don't know what you mean. Godfather.

**MORLOCK [the squelching noises stop.]** There. I think I can take a break from the missing link now. Let's pay another visit to the catalogue, shall we?

**JUSTINE:** Godfather, I -

**MORLOCK:** Follow me, Cousin.

**GRAMS:** Background music.

**VOICE:** Reconstruction number three. Report filed to General Kine of the Seventy-Ninth Sontaran Assault Corps, following the attack on the Eleven-Day Empire.

**SONTARAN:** Although the operation was a success, certain factors should be brought to the attention of the Assault Corps' tactical division. Most crucially, we have not been fully informed of the weapons capability of Faction Paradox. Those troops who fought the Faction's boarding-parties report that their scanners detected no weaponry concealed in the boarders' armour; yet several Sontaran bodies were found cut in half. Three of our troops report that although the enemy carried no weapons, they saw the shadows of the Faction's soldiers carrying an assortment of blades, guns, and other side-arms. One of our defenders has told us that his leg was severed by a female whose hands never moved during combat, but whose shadow took on a life of its own and cut him down before he could open fire. Naturally, such claims are not to be taken at face value. Although Faction Paradox might feasibly possess invisible weaponry - weaponry

clearly in breach of our own code of honour - invisible weapons would not account for the phantom shapes seen by our defending forces. The suggestion that the shadows of Faction Paradox are dangerous in themselves is obviously ridiculous. We do not intend to spend this campaign fighting ghosts.

**F/X:** The echo suggests a large indoor area, as do the constant footsteps of Justine and Morlock.

**MORLOCK:** You know, you're a very talented young woman, Justine. I've heard good things about your part in the counter-attack. Mostly from Cousin Eliza, of course, but even so.

**JUSTINE:** I only killed eight of them. It was no great achievement. May I ask where we're going?

**MORLOCK:** You may ask. There are eighteen-billion species filed in this catalogue, you know. They stretch all the way through the tunnels, from here to High Barnet. We're going to make a quick inspection of the stock. Now, tell me something. You were on the Sontaran warship. What did you make of them?

**JUSTINE:** I think they were stupid.

**MORLOCK:** Stupid how?

**JUSTINE:** Brutal. Graceless. They didn't even notice our shadow-weapons.

**MORLOCK:** And their tactics?

**JUSTINE:** Their attack was pointless. They forced their way into our city, and thought we'd surrender.

**MORLOCK:** Yes. Which is odd, all things considered. You see, the Sontarans *aren't* stupid. As homunculi go, they're ugly and they're pig-headed, but they've had six-million years' experience of warfare. If they wanted to invade us, why such a badly-prepared attack? Hmm?

**JUSTINE:** Eliza... *Cousin* Eliza... thought there should have been an invasion force ready.

**MORLOCK:** Curious, isn't it? But then, it all makes sense if someone told them about the way the Empire's defences work.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry. I don't think I understand.

**MORLOCK:** Our defences aren't purely technological, Justine. Remember that. Our weapons can hold off a small army or two, but there's not a lot guns can do to stop someone, say, sending a small time-travel pod into the heart of the city and infiltrating Parliament. Of course, the Sontarans don't have the technology to do anything so precise.

**JUSTINE:** But Parliament's under the protection of the spirits. If someone tried to enter the city alone, the spirits would tear them to pieces.

**MORLOCK:** Oh yes. Unless the spirits were otherwise occupied. Trying to hold off a Sontaran warship, for example.

**F/X:** The footsteps stop.

**JUSTINE:** It was a distraction. The attack was just a distraction.

**MORLOCK:** It explains a lot, don't you think? Why the warship backed down so easily, for one thing. No offence to your efforts, Justine, but the Sontarans aren't known for running from a fight.

**JUSTINE:** You said the Sontarans didn't have the technology to make a precise landing inside Parliament. If you're saying that they put an agent here while we were distracted...

**MORLOCK:** Then that suggests one thing, don't you think?

**JUSTINE:** They're working with one of the other Houses.

**MORLOCK:** Very good, Justine. Very good. But please don't cross yourself in my presence, it offends my sensibilities. Yes, with all that racket going on outside, an enemy time-capsule could easily have slipped into the city right under our noses.

**JUSTINE:** But we can't be sure...

**MORLOCK:** Oh, I think we can. Turn to your left. What do you see?

**JUSTINE [after a pause]:** The specimens. Specimens in jars. An embryo. A stuffed reptile of some description. And... is that what it looks like, Godfather?

**MORLOCK:** No. It's *two* of what it looks like, joined together at the hip. Rare Siamese mutation. But look there. There, you see it? The second jar down.

**JUSTINE:** Oh. It looks... mechanical.

**MORLOCK:** It *is* mechanical. It's a fusion bomb.

**JUSTINE [shocked pause]:** I beg your pardon?

**MORLOCK:** I should have known, really. I thought there'd be something missing from the inventory, but I had no idea they'd put a bomb in its place. Should have checked the catalogue straight away, shouldn't I? Serves me right for getting distracted by that missing link. It'll be detonating soon.

**JUSTINE:** A *bomb*?

**MORLOCK:** Mmm. The question is, what are we going to do about it?

**JUSTINE:** We have to leave here! Now!

**MORLOCK:** You know, you're starting to sound just like Cousin Eliza. No, it'll be going off any minute, I should think. A bomb that size... what, twenty-three centimetres long with a sixteen centimetre circumference... should be enough to take out most of the tunnels. We'll be dead before we can get back up to the surface.

**JUSTINE:** Then... what do we do?

**MORLOCK:** Good question. Any ideas?

**Fade.**

**F/X:** We hear the roar of the Sontaran warship again, but muted this time (the idea being that we're now on board).

**SONTARAN:** We're now outside the Faction's space altogether, General. No further disturbances to our systems.

**GENERAL:** Good. Send complete recordings of the interference to the technical division. Inform them I expect a complete analysis within two hours.

**SONTARAN:** General.

**GENERAL:** The Faction believes the disturbances are caused by spirits. Let's see how their cultists stand up to a *real* Empire.

**F/X:** During this next speech, the door of the bridge hums open. After this, we slowly become aware of a new sound: the sound, oddly enough, of a baby gurgling.

**SONTARAN:** Fusion device due to detonate within four minutes.

**GENERAL:** Keep me informed, Lieutenant.

**LOLITA:** It's not going to do any good, of course.

**GENERAL [hissing]:** You have not been invited onto the bridge!

**LOLITA:** No. But I didn't think you'd have the heart to stop me.

**GENERAL:** The military side of this operation is our concern. Your role is to supply technology and intelligence. Do not attempt to get in our way.

**LOLITA:** Oh, you know me. I'm a born civilian. But the fusion bomb's a stupid idea anyway.

**GENERAL:** Any additional damage we can inflict on the enemy is worthwhile.

**LOLITA:** It'll just annoy them. At best, all you're going to do is wipe out their butterfly collection. We've got what we came for, there's no reason to push the point just yet.

**GENERAL:** Do not presume to question my authority!

**F/X:** The baby starts crying.

**LOLITA [clicks her tongue]:** Now look what you've done.

**GENERAL:** Your infant is becoming an irritation.

**LOLITA:** She doesn't think much of you, either. Why don't we compromise? You don't criticize my maternal instincts, and I won't criticize your tactical decisions. However stupid they are.



**GENERAL [mocking]:** Maternal instincts!

**LOLITA:** Oh, you're laughing now. Don't forget, General. A couple of years ago, my people weren't capable of natural childbirth any more than yours are. Just you wait. A few decades from now, you could be running your ship seven months gone and with a big Sontaran lump in your guts.

**SONTARAN:** Fusion device due to detonate in three minutes.

**Fade.**

**MORLOCK:** Three minutes..

**JUSTINE:** What?

**MORLOCK:** The bomb's got a decaying isotope for a timer. If I concentrate, I can hear the electrons breaking off. We've got another two minutes and fifty-three seconds.

**JUSTINE [to herself, whispering]:** Our pattern, our flesh, and one restoration...

**MORLOCK:** You're not in the nineteenth century now, Justine. The spirits aren't God. You don't get bonus afterlife points for praying. You're armed, I hope?

**JUSTINE:** Armed?

**MORLOCK:** Your shadow. Your spirit-weapon. Is it ready for action?

**JUSTINE:** It's *always* ready, Godfather. We were told -

**MORLOCK:** Yes, yes. I know. Hold up your hand.

**JUSTINE:** But it's -

**MORLOCK:** Don't argue. Hold up your hand. Let me see your shadow. Show me what kind of weapon you're carrying, that's it. Hmm. So, your weapon of choice is a sword, is it? You killed eight Sontarans with a sword.

**JUSTINE:** They couldn't see it. Godfather, please. The bomb -

**MORLOCK:** Quite all right. We've still got another, ohh, hundred and fifty-six seconds at least. No, of course the Sontarans couldn't see it. It's not in their nature to look at shadows. Drop your sword, Justine.

**JUSTINE:** Pardon?

**MORLOCK:** Your sword. Drop it. Let go of it. Make your shadow open its hand, and put the weapon down.

**JUSTINE:** Godfather, it's my spirit-weapon. It's bonded to my shadow, I can't just -

**MORLOCK:** Yes you can, Justine. It's easy. Just let go. Let go of your sword.

**JUSTINE:** But *why*?

**MORLOCK:** Because I'm trying to save your life. Unless, of course, you don't want your spirit to go to the afterlife unarmed?

**F/X:** There's a pause, and then a clattering sound: not exactly a sword hitting the floor, more like the echo of a sword hitting the floor. (Another effect we're going to be hearing a lot of.)

**MORLOCK:** Good. Wasn't so hard, was it? Now pick up the bomb.

**JUSTINE:** What?

**MORLOCK:** Cousin... would it make you move any faster if I told you that you've got two minutes left?

**JUSTINE:** Yes, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** Good. Because you've only got a minute and forty-five seconds. Now pick up the bomb. Take it out of the jar. **[Pause.]** No, not like that!

**JUSTINE:** Not like what?

**MORLOCK:** Don't use your hands. Use your shadow.

**JUSTINE:** I... how can I...?

**MORLOCK:** You remember how your sword was bonded to you, don't you? They put a sword in front of you, and...?

**JUSTINE:** And... I reached out for it...

**MORLOCK:** But you reached out with your shadow. Your real arm stayed still, didn't it? Your shadow reached out and picked up the sword, all by itself.

**JUSTINE:** Yes, but -

**MORLOCK:** And what happened then? Ninety seconds.

**JUSTINE:** My shadow picked up the sword, and... the sword vanished. There was just the shadow of it. My shadow was holding it.

**MORLOCK:** Because it wasn't a sword any more, was it? It was part of you. Part of your identity.

**JUSTINE:** I remember.

**MORLOCK:** You've dropped your sword, Justine. You don't have a weapon any more. So pick up the bomb.

**JUSTINE:** I can't!

**MORLOCK:** It's a weapon. Like any other weapon. You did it before.

**JUSTINE:** But only as part of my armament rite. Godmother Quelch performed the ritual, she had to call on the spirits before I could do it. It's not possible -

**MORLOCK:** It is for you. You've got the witch-blood in you. Haven't you?

**JUSTINE [pause]:** Very well. I'll try.

**MORLOCK:** Good. Now. It's not hard, you just have to lift up your hand... no, keep your arm still. Don't move your flesh.

**JUSTINE:** I'm trying -

**MORLOCK:** Shh. Just the shadow. Move your shadow, not your flesh. There. See? Your fingers are twitching. Your shadow-fingers. Now just lift... that's right... reach out...

**JUSTINE:** How long have we got?

**MORLOCK:** Forty-five seconds. A hundred seconds. Ten minutes. It doesn't matter. There, that's it. Almost there. Let your fingers grip the bomb. Let your shadow slip around it. Gently, now.

**JUSTINE:** I can feel it. I can feel myself holding it.

**MORLOCK:** Good. Good. Now. Lift it up.

**JUSTINE:** It's...

**MORLOCK:** Yes?

**JUSTINE:** It's gone. I can't see it. It's gone.

**MORLOCK:** Look at your shadow, Justine. It's still there, you can see it. It's part of you now.

**JUSTINE:** Yes. Yes, I can feel it, it's... no, wait.

**MORLOCK:** Something wrong?

**JUSTINE:** It's still primed. The timer. I can feel it in my palm.

**MORLOCK:** Of course it's still primed. It'll go off in... about eighteen seconds, I should say.

**JUSTINE:** How can it go off? It's just a shadow!

**MORLOCK:** Your sword was just a shadow. You still killed eight Sontarans with it.

**JUSTINE:** Then... are we still going to die?

**MORLOCK:** Seven seconds.

**JUSTINE:** That isn't an answer, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** No, it isn't. Four. Three. Two. One.

**F/X:** A huge explosion. Or possibly just an echo of a huge explosion.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Sontaran bridge background. The baby's still gurgling.

**SONTARAN:** Fusion bomb detonated.

**GENERAL:** Damage projection? **[Pause.]** Well?

**SONTARAN:** General... the signal from the bomb...

**GENERAL:** I don't expect anything to have gone wrong, Lieutenant.

**SONTARAN:** The signal, General. The readings make no sense.

**LOLITA:** Told you.

**GENERAL:** Your input is not required!

**LOLITA:** You don't listen, do you? You're dealing with a House that specializes in doing the impossible. Which doesn't mean they're more dangerous than any other House, it just means they're more irritating.

**GENERAL:** Procedure will be followed!

**F/X:** The baby starts crying again.

**LOLITA:** Shh. Shh. It's all right. It's just the nasty humpty-dumpty man shouting.

**GENERAL:** We can proceed with the next step of the operation. Contact your own people. Tell them it's time.

**LOLITA:** I keep telling you, General. They're not my people. But I'll do it if it'll make you happy.

**F/X:** The door hums open. The baby's crying fades away.

**LOLITA [leaving]:** There. It's all right. Mummy's got work to do.

**F/X:** The door hums shut behind Lolita.

**Fade.**

**MORLOCK [after a reasonable silence]:** Well? How do you feel?

**JUSTINE:** Empty. Hollow. I think... it's because I dropped my weapon. It's been part of me for so long...

**MORLOCK:** I'd say it goes a little deeper than that, Cousin. Look at the wall.

**JUSTINE:** What? **[Gasps.]**

**MORLOCK:** I'm sorry.

**JUSTINE:** My shadow... I don't have a shadow...

**MORLOCK:** No. The bomb must have destroyed everything in the area. Not on the level of matter, fortunately, which is why we're still here to talk about it.

**JUSTINE:** Have I lost my spirit, then? If I don't have a shadow...

**MORLOCK:** That's debatable. If you *have*, we're both in the same boat.

**JUSTINE:** What? Oh. Oh, I see.

**MORLOCK:** Yes. Looks like I won't be making any rabbit-shapes on the walls in the foreseeable future. Well done, Cousin Justine. You did very well.

**JUSTINE:** I serve the House, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** Well. Let's get back to the surface, shall we? I'm sure this is exactly the kind of unnecessary military action that should interest Godfather Sabbath.

**JUSTINE:** Godfather... you said something had been taken. Something had been stolen from the catalogue.

**MORLOCK:** Yes. There is that.

**F/X:** Echoing footsteps as Morlock starts to walk away.

**JUSTINE:** What did they take?

**MORLOCK:** Backup biodata.

**JUSTINE:** "Backup"?

**MORLOCK:** Biological samples from our own family. Maybe yours. Maybe mine. The biodata records of the Eleven-Day Empire.

**JUSTINE:** They want to know more about us?

**MORLOCK [getting further away]:** More about our weaknesses, I'd say. The campaign's just beginning. Come along, Cousin Justine.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Outside. In the background, the chimes of Big Ben sound the half-hour. We hear footsteps on the ground.

**ELIZA [to herself]:** Bloody Sontarans. Bloody Godfathers. If they think I'm the ones who's fixing that flying machine -.

**F/X:** When Eliza breaks off, we can hear something in the distance. It's the same kind of low whining sound we heard when the sky opened up for



the Sontarans, but much fainter this time.

**ELIZA:** Oh, Christ. Not again.

**MORLOCK [arriving]:** I rather think that's the sound of the future.

**ELIZA:** Oh. Godfather. Hi, Justine. It's happening again, isn't it? The sky's opening.

**MORLOCK:** The Sontaran attack was almost certainly just a prelude. The plot is, in a very real sense, about to thicken.

**JUSTINE:** Another attack?

**MORLOCK:** No. Look. They're materializing over St. Paul's, by the look of it. Whoever's coming to see us, they're keeping their distance this time.

**ELIZA [to herself]:** I can't do this. I can't go through this again.

**JUSTINE:** Those ships... they're not Sontaran.

**MORLOCK:** No. Time to hold a session of Parliament, I think.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Faint wind, as in the opening scene. Big Ben chimes one in the distance. We can hear another sound now, like an engine, slowly building. It's a long way away, though. We can also hear the flapping of great wings, a lot closer by.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** Moving. Time-ships moving.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Future starting. Like we saw.

**UNKINDNESS 3:** Dodo! More dodo! Like the sound. Sound of dodo ripping.

**UNKINDNESS 2:** No more dodo. Dodo gone. No more ever.

**UNKINDNESS 1:** Pity.

**Fade.**

**GRAMS:** Background music.

**VOICE:** Reconstruction number four. From the memoirs of Godfather Morlock.

**MORLOCK:** The Parliament buildings never cease to astonish me. The shadows they cast through history. Just consider: all those layers of the past, waiting to be dissected. One day, our tracking-knives will be able to take apart architecture as keenly as they can take apart flesh, and the secrets these buildings could give up are beyond even my imagining. **[Pause.]** Well, maybe not mine.

**F/X:** The sound of Parliament (could we possibly use real Parliamentary recordings for this?). The noise of a full House, the members of the assembly mumbling and muttering to themselves before proceedings begin.

**MORLOCK:** Ladies and gentlemen. If I could have a reasonable amount of your attention?

**F/X:** The hubbub dies down.

**MORLOCK:** Well now. As acting emergency speaker of this House, and by the protocols laid down for proceedings in the absence of the

Grandfather, this meeting of Parliament is officially called to order. Etcetera etcetera, and so on and so forth.

**F/X:** Murmurs of agreement from the House.

**MORLOCK:** Now, I'm sure most of you will already be aware of the situation. Following the assault on Parliament this morning, new developments have... well, in a word, developed. As you'll have gathered, half a dozen new vessels have now entered our capital in the region of St. Paul's. A veritable fleet. These are, as you'll have spotted, time-ships in the service of the other Houses. We've established that each of the ships represents a different House, including House Tracolix and House Lineacrux, neither of which have had official relations with us for some time.

**F/X:** Disturbed murmurs.

**MORLOCK:** Yes, that's what *I* thought. As acting emergency speaker, it's my duty to inform the House that two hours ago, this Parliament received a message from one of those ships. It's eight pages long and full of the usual diplomatic drivel, but I'll give it to you in a nutshell. They want to open negotiations with us.

**F/X:** .More concerned mumblings from the House.

**Fade.**

**JUSTINE [prayer, whispering]:** .Conception, completion, one bloodline in motion. Our will in the ocean of misinformation.

**ELIZA [entering, background]:** Justine?

**JUSTINE [off-guard, caught in mid-prayer]:** Cousin.

**ELIZA:** I wish you'd stop calling me that.

**JUSTINE:** Eliza, then. Did you want me?

**ELIZA:** No. **[Pause.]** Yeah. You always end up here, don't you?

**JUSTINE:** It's a chapel. It's where we're supposed to find peace.

**ELIZA:** Yeah, well. To me, that thing you're praying to doesn't look like peace. It looks like a six-foot bat-skull.

**JUSTINE:** It's a relic. And I'm not praying to it. I'm... speaking with the spirits.

**ELIZA:** Don't believe you. Did you used to be a Catholic before you came here?

**JUSTINE [snaps]:** No! I... my parents brought me up in the Church of England.

**ELIZA:** Uh-huh. Must have been religious.

**JUSTINE:** Why do you ask?

**ELIZA:** The way you cross yourself instead of swearing. You don't even think about it, do you?

**JUSTINE:** It's difficult, sometimes. To break the habits. To talk to the spirits instead of praying to them.

**ELIZA:** Is that why you called yourself Justine?

**JUSTINE:** I don't understand.

**ELIZA:** Well... you know. It's a bit Marquis de Sade, isn't it? Like you were trying to do something really bad and disgusting for once.

**JUSTINE:** Justine isn't my confirmation name. It's the name I was born with.

**ELIZA:** Really? So you didn't feel like changing it when you got recruited?

**JUSTINE:** I felt there were... certain things... one shouldn't try to escape from.

**ELIZA:** Can't say I'm with you there.

**JUSTINE:** "Eliza" isn't the name you were born with, then?

**ELIZA:** No. It's like Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*.

**JUSTINE:** I'm sorry, I don't...

**ELIZA:** Bit after your time. You know *Pygmalion*? George Bernard Shaw?

**JUSTINE:** I've heard of it.

**ELIZA:** It's like that. That's the way I used to feel. Like I'd been put together for someone else's benefit. Plus, my friends can call me Liz. One of the victims of Jack the Ripper was called Liz. You remember Jack the Ripper?

**JUSTINE:** I seem to remember the newspapers. I was very young. My parents refused to explain to me what a "prostitute" was. Why would you want to share your name with...?

**ELIZA:** Long story. Born victim, that's me.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Back to the rumblings of Parliament.

**MORLOCK:** Our visitors want permission... and I quote... "to dispatch delegations of the major Houses into the territory of House Paradox". Technically, of course, they already *are* in our territory, but you know what they mean. The purpose of these delegations, it seems, is to come to an official agreement. To settle the small print of a treaty of recognition. A treaty which will once again see Faction Paradox... *House* Paradox... recognized as an equal by the Council of Houses.

**F/X:** Some surprise and protest.

**MORLOCK:** Of course, I know what you're thinking. You're thinking; why? Why would they want to welcome us back their bosom, when the other Houses have treated us like lepers for the last thousand years or so? A good question. Well done, all of you. According to this message, the other Houses wish to begin "a new era of peace and cooperation". They go on to say - and again, I quote - that "in times such as these, we can no longer ignore our brothers and sisters in House Paradox, and cannot in all conscience continue to pretend that they do not exist".

**F/X:** Cynical laughter.

**MORLOCK:** At this juncture, I'd like like to remind this House of a two little details. First, the fact that we've remained isolated for years, only to receive two visitations within one day. One softens us up, and the other then asks us to resume, how shall we put it, *diplomatic relations* with the Houses who've spent the last few centuries trying to brush us under the carpet. Secondly, I'd like to point out that someone - *someone* - assisted the Sontarans in their assault on Parliament. Am I making myself clear?

**F/X:** Uproar in the House.

**Fade.**

**JUSTINE:** What did you mean, "I can't go through this again"?

**ELIZA:** What?

**JUSTINE:** It's what you said before. When the time-ships came.

**ELIZA:** Christ. You've got a good memory, haven't you?

**JUSTINE:** Only for things that seem important.

**ELIZA:** Yeah. Well. I've seen it happen before, you know? Before I came here. I used to live in a city a lot like this. Different world. Different time. Different universe, come to think of it. Same thing happened, though. One day, the sky just opened. And that was it. That was the end of it all.

**JUSTINE:** The Sontarans?

**ELIZA:** God, no. One of the other Houses. Tore up all the cities. Turned most of the people into worker-drones. That was the way I found out about things. About how the universe *really* works. About the Houses running it all from behind the scenes. I was pretty much the only person who got away, so... you can see how I ended up here. You know what the family's like for picking up hopeless people. No offence.

**JUSTINE:** Does it worry you? The other Houses coming here?

**ELIZA:** What do *you* think? [**After a pause.**] Justine?

**JUSTINE:** Eliza?

**ELIZA:** Is it true? About your shadow.

**JUSTINE:** Yes. It's true. Godfather Morlock, also.

**ELIZA:** Right. So does that mean...?

**JUSTINE:** I don't know. I really don't. Godfather Morlock doesn't seem concerned, but... if my shadow's supposed to represent my spirit...

**ELIZA:** This is the Faction talking, though. "Spirit" doesn't mean "soul", it's not like on Earth. "Spirit" means... you know. Like one of the spirits. Like a genie in a bottle or something.

**JUSTINE:** I hope so. I certainly hope so.

**ELIZA:** But you're going to keep praying anyway.

**JUSTINE:** I'm not praying. Not at all.

**ELIZA:** Yeah. Whatever.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Back to Parliament. A prolonged hubbub from the members.

**MORLOCK:** Order! Order in the House! Ladies, gentlemen, please try to pretend to give a damn about protocol.

**F/X:** The noise subsides.

**MORLOCK:** Now, to me things seem quite straightforward. We're being asked to re-establish links with the other Houses, simply so they can get close to us for some reason. Given that 93-and-a-half per cent of our previous encounters with House Tracolix have involved some form of betrayal, it's really very clear that this is a trap.

**F/X:** A gloomy murmur from the House.

**MORLOCK:** So I say we walk right into it.



**F/X:** A great reaction from the House. Oddly, a lot of the members are cheering.

**Fade.**

**GRAMS:** Background music.

**VOICE:** Reconstruction number five. From a report to General Kine of the Seventy-Ninth Sontaran Assault Corps.

**LOLITA:** I'll tell you why you don't understand them, General. You don't understand them because you don't know what "living dangerously" means. That's your problem, isn't it? To you, "sacrifice" means what you do to troops on a battlefield. A couple of thousand dead Sontarans here, a couple of million there. They're homunculi, they're clones, what does it matter? The Faction's different, though. Sacrifice is something personal to these people. Those spirits of theirs want more bloodshed every day. Do you know what the most famous legend of Faction Paradox is? It's the story of how their Grandfather founded the House. It's all very tedious and mythic, I'll just give you the basics. The Grandfather was a criminal among the Houses, so even after he escaped from his prison he still had the criminal tattoo on his arm. Which tied him to the Homeworld, obviously, and which linked him to the people he was trying to get away from. So the first thing he did, once he was free...are you listening to this? The first thing he did was get hold of a knife and slice his own arm off. Offering it to the spirits, probably. Oh, don't get me wrong, as sacrifices go it isn't a big one. But it's a funny thing, the number of Faction people you see who've only got one arm. Makes you wonder, doesn't it? Did they all copy the Grandfather? Or do the spirits just make sure they keep having little "accidents"?

**F/X:** Exterior background. We hear an engine approaching, though it's not as loud or as deep as the noise the Sontaran ship made (same sound played at a different pitch, maybe?).

**MORLOCK [addressing a crowd]:** All right, everybody pay attention. That's the personal time-ship of Lord Ruthven coming in to land, so Parliament wants everyone on their best behaviour. Lord Ruthven's a big wheel in House Tracolix, apparently, and that means we're supposed to be terribly polite to him. We don't want to see the honour-guard giving him the finger while he's not looking, tempting as it may be. Let's not try to start a war unless we really mean it.

**F/X:** The engine gets louder, and closer; the time-ship touching down. The engine noise fades.

**ELIZA:** Well, here we go.

**MORLOCK:** Quite. Take over, Cousin Eliza.

**ELIZA:** What?

**MORLOCK:** Receive our guests. I've got matters to attend to elsewhere.

**ELIZA:** Godfather... you're the speaker of the House, you can't just -

**MORLOCK [getting further away]:** Acting speaker. Don't worry, I'm sure you'll do a perfectly good job. One way or another.

**ELIZA:** I'm only a Cousin! Isn't there anyone -

**F/X:** Hum of a hatchway opening (possibly the same noise as the doors on the Sontaran ship, but deeper to suggest a larger entrance). There's the sound of footsteps on metal, a dozen or so people filing out of the vessel.

**RUTHVEN:** Good afternoon. It is afternoon here, I take it?

**ELIZA:** Er... yeah. My Lord. That is who you are, yeah? Lord...?

**RUTHVEN:** Lord Ruthven. House Tracolix. And you are?

**ELIZA:** Cousin Eliza. Faction Paradox. Sorry, um... on behalf of the family, I... we'd like to welcome you to the Eleven-Day Empire. And everything.

**F/X:** What background noise there is fades drastically. Throughout this next scene, we can hear Eliza and Ruthven talking in the background.

**JUSTINE [whispering]:** Godfather!

**MORLOCK [also quiet]:** Yes?

**JUSTINE:** You're supposed to greet them personally. And Eliza -

**MORLOCK:** Eliza will be perfectly all right. The worst she can do is insult them horribly. And if they're plotting against us, they'll go out of their way not to be insulted.

**JUSTINE:** What if they're not plotting against us?

**MORLOCK:** Unheard of. What do you notice? About Lord Ruthven's retinue.

**JUSTINE:** Notice?

**MORLOCK:** They're supposed to represent all the major Houses. Plus a few well-chosen bodyguards.

**JUSTINE:** They're all dressed the same, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** Doesn't matter. Can't you see their genetic makeup?

**JUSTINE:** No.

**MORLOCK:** You should get a pair of spectacles like mine. You see the world in a whole new light.

**JUSTINE:** You're not wearing spectacles.

**MORLOCK:** My shadow, Cousin. Look at my shadow.

**JUSTINE:** Oh. I see. **[Suddenly realizes.]** Wait. You've got a shadow. I thought -

**MORLOCK:** As I was saying. The delegates. Odd, wouldn't you say? A couple of them are human, for a start.

**JUSTINE:** *We're* human, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** But the Faction's the only House that gives full blood-membership to the lower species. Lord Ruthven's from House Tracolix, I can't see him associating with human scum like us without a good reason. What do you mean, "we're human"?

**JUSTINE:** I just meant -

**MORLOCK:** You're supposed to give up your humanity at your initiation. Like a bad habit. Or did you miss out that part?

**JUSTINE:** I only -

**MORLOCK:** Never mind. The point is, it's almost as if the Houses don't want to send any of their proper members here, just in case. What do you make of that woman? The one hovering next to Ruthven.

**JUSTINE:** She's carrying a baby.

**MORLOCK:** Unusual enough in itself. She's pregnant with another one, as well.

**JUSTINE:** Are you sure?

**MORLOCK:** Eight weeks gone, I'd guess. Her DNA, though. Most peculiar. Hardly DNA at all, in fact.

**JUSTINE:** My eyesight isn't as good as yours, Godfather.

**MORLOCK:** Well, perhaps I'm too sensitive for my own good. Now then, Cousin Justine. You'd better come with me. There's something I want you to take a look at.

**F/X:** Change of focus. Back to Eliza and Ruthven.

**RUTHVEN:** ...as we said in our communication, this *is* a mission of peace. These are changing times for all of us. You've been keeping track of Homeworld politics, I trust?

**ELIZA:** Whose homeworld?

**RUTHVEN:** Ah. Of course, you're human. Forgive me. I was referring to the *original* homeworld. The cradle of all the great Houses. Changing times, Cousin. Changing times. These petty inter-House struggles can't be allowed to go on. Not while half of us are still trying to fight a decent war against our *real* enemies. Don't you agree?

**ELIZA [unconvinced]:** Oh, yeah. Sure.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Footsteps (interior). Justine and Morlock.

**JUSTINE:** Where are we going?

**MORLOCK:** West tower. Lower level.

**JUSTINE:** The ritual hall?

**MORLOCK:** The ritual hall. Haven't you heard? Parliament's asked me to pull a few special weapons out of the archives. Godmother Quelch is bonding them to some of the Faction's finest. I think they're trying to build up an elite fighting force, or some such.

**JUSTINE:** Special weapons? You mean, the relics?

**MORLOCK:** If you like. It's been a while since we did any proper fighting. I'd say Parliament's getting a bit edgy. You never saw what happened to our last city, did you?

**JUSTINE:** No, Godfather. Godfather... I apologise, but I have to ask. Your shadow.

**MORLOCK:** I stole a new one.

**JUSTINE:** Stole?

**F/X:** Footsteps stop abruptly.

**MORLOCK:** A-hah. Godmother Quelch. Looking as fetching as ever.

**QUELCH [approaching]:** Morlock!

**MORLOCK:** Yes?

**QUELCH:** You're an arse.

**MORLOCK:** By volume, Godmother, you're exactly three-point-one per cent correct. How are the operations going?

**QUELCH:** Rituals. Not operations. And you knew this was going to happen, didn't you?

**MORLOCK:** Is there a problem?

**QUELCH:** Your "relics". Those piss-poor excuses for weaponry you've given us. Do you have any *idea* how much trouble we're having, bonding them to the subjects? Do you?

**MORLOCK:** They're items of great power, Godmother. If you can't control them properly...

**QUELCH:** They'd better be "items of great power". If I find out you've faked them in that lab, I'll stitch a cock in the middle of your shadow's forehead and charge people to use it.

**MORLOCK:** Do you know, that's the fifteenth time you've threatened to stitch something to my shadow? It's the thirteenth time you've chosen genitalia, as well.

**QUELCH:** You've got the face for it. What's this you've brought with you?

**JUSTINE:** Cousin Justine, Godmother.

**QUELCH:** Oh yes. I remember you. The failure.

**JUSTINE [quietly]:** Yes, Godmother.

**QUELCH:** Still made me waste a bonding on you, though, didn't they?

**MORLOCK:** Cousin Justine's under my protection. We've come to watch you attach the knife. Or *try* to attach the knife, anyway.

**QUELCH:** We've been trying to attach the bloody knife for the last half hour. Oh, all right then. Bring the thing in with you, see if I care. We can always use her for spares if we need to do an amputation.

**MORLOCK:** I said *protection*, Quelch.

**QUELCH:** Hah!

**Fade.**

**F/X:** The background noise of the ritual hall. Something suitably spiritual in order here; the sound of several hundred people whispering in unison would be good, if utterly impractical. There's a huge amount of cathedral-like echo, so even though Godmother Quelch's standing some way away we can hear her quite clearly.

**QUELCH:** All right, who's next? You! You, come up here now.

**JUSTINE [whispering, foreground]:** There's so many of them...

**MORLOCK [also whispering]:** So many what?

**JUSTINE:** Initiates. When I had my sword bound to me -

**MORLOCK:** They're not initiates. They're Godfather Sabbath's elite troops. They've had their old weapons stripped off, ready for the heavy artillery to be fitted.

**QUELCH:** Come on, boy. Don't be shy. This isn't going to hurt, unless I have to rip your bloody arm off.

**JUSTINE:** That knife...

**MORLOCK:** I told you. Heavy artillery.

**JUSTINE:** It's so small. It's just a rusty old carving-knife.

**MORLOCK:** I think you'll find that relics tend to look that way.



**QUELCH:** Don't squirm so much, boy. You've been through this before, haven't you? Just stand there and don't talk. Shut your eyes, if you have to.

**JUSTINE:** My bonding-ritual took longer than this.

**MORLOCK:** Quelch is gearing up for war. Production-line speed.

**QUELCH:** There, boy. That's it. Reach out. No, not with your hand. With your shadow. Oh, for... you've done it before, don't pretend you've forgotten. Yes! That's right. Reach out. Reach out for the knife. No, down... down a bit... open your eyes, stupid! There. Good.

**F/X:** Gasping noises from the boy, although we don't immediately pick up on them.

**QUELCH:** That's it! That's right! Lift it up. Make it part of yourself.

**F/X:** The gasping becomes more pronounced. The boy is trying to speak, possibly to scream, but he's choking at the same time.

**QUELCH:** What's wrong, boy? Can't you feel it? You're almost there!

**F/X:** Finally, a terrible, choking howl emerges from the boy's mouth. He sounds like he's having a spasm.

**QUELCH:** Let go of it! Let go of the knife!

**JUSTINE:** Oh, dear God.

**F/X:** The spasm gets worse. The boy is whooping and gagging.

**QUELCH:** You there! You, boy! Come and help us, what's the matter with you? Get the knife! Get it out of his hands!

**JUSTINE:** The Godmother... she can help him, can't she?

**MORLOCK:** I doubt it.

**QUELCH:** We're losing him! We're losing him, you idiots! Get the knife off him!

**JUSTINE:** He's vanishing!

**MORLOCK:** Yes.

**JUSTINE:** He's -

**MORLOCK:** Sinking into his shadow. I know.

**QUELCH:** He's going! He's going!

**F/X:** There's a final strangulated gasp from the boy. Then there's silence. Even the whisperers shut up. Finally, the silence is broken.

**QUELCH:** Shit! Another one gone. Another sodding *failure*.

**F/X:** The whisperers start praying again, but quietly.

**JUSTINE [quietly]:** I can see him. I can still see him.

**MORLOCK:** Where? Oh, I see.

**JUSTINE:** The wall...

**MORLOCK:** Nothing left but the shadow. Only to be expected.

**QUELCH:** All right, everybody settle down. We'll try this again. From the start.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Exterior background.

**ELIZA:** Um... so. That ship of yours. It's a time-ship, right?

**RUTHVEN:** Oh, do you like it? It's modelled on my own DNA triple-helix. With a few aerodynamic adjustments. Not that they're necessary for a time-ship, of course, but one likes to keep up appearances.

**F/X:** Baby gurgling in the background, but very quiet.

**LOLITA:** Lord Ruthven.

**RUTHVEN:** Mmm?

**LOLITA:** I hate to interrupt you, my Lord, but I think we should proceed now. Don't you?

**RUTHVEN:** Oh, of course. Of course. I'm sorry, I haven't introduced you. This is Cousin... Eliza, isn't it? Of House Paradox.

**ELIZA:** Oh, hi. My lady.

**LOLITA:** I'm not a lady. And you can call me Lolita.

**ELIZA:** From House Tracolix....?

**LOLITA [laughs]:** Hardly.

**RUTHVEN:** Lolita isn't from one of the major Houses. She's here on behalf of one of the newblood families.

**LOLITA:** Oh yes. As new as blood gets.

**RUTHVEN [half-amused]:** You'll have to forgive her, Cousin. You know what these young Houses are like. Protocol's not their strong suit.

**ELIZA [uncertain]:** Sure. Right.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Ritual hall background. Over the sound of the mass whisper-in, we can hear more gargling, choking noises; the sound of another victim being sucked into his own shadow. After a while, the noise dies down. Once again, there's silence.

**QUELCH:** Another one. *Another* one. Another sodding, useless... why are you people such a bunch of *failures*?

**JUSTINE [whispering]:** How long is she going to keep doing this?

**QUELCH:** All right. There has to be one of you here who's strong enough to take it. Who's going to try next, then? **[No reply.]** You, boy! You! Come here.

**MORLOCK [not whispering now]:** I think that's enough, Quelch.

**QUELCH:** *What?*

**MORLOCK:** Surely you must be getting the idea by now. None of them are going to survive it. How many have you got through? Thirteen new shadows on the wall? Maybe fourteen?

**QUELCH:** Mind your own business, Morlock!

**MORLOCK:** Weapons preparation *is* my business, Godmother.

**QUELCH:** And look at the job you've made of it so far! If you'd prepared the knife properly -

**MORLOCK:** You *can't* prepare the knife. Isn't it obvious? I did try to tell you. It won't work.

**QUELCH:** It needs a strong enough subject! That's all!

**MORLOCK:** But you've run out of volunteers. The cream of our fighting force, and none of them want to step forward. Why is that, do you think?

**QUELCH:** They're scared!

**MORLOCK:** Of course they're scared. They're scared because they know the truth. It doesn't matter how strong they are. The knife's all that's left of the Grandfather. It's the most powerful totem-weapon in the whole of the Eleven-Day Empire. It's too strong for *any* of them.

**JUSTINE:** The knife...

**QUELCH:** Shut that creature up!

**MORLOCK:** No. What is it, Justine?

**JUSTINE:** The knife. It's the Grandfather's knife, isn't it?

**MORLOCK:** The one he used to cut his arm off, right at the start of it all. His blood's still on the blade. It's the only trace of his flesh that's left in the world. A piece of his body. A piece of his timeline.

**QUELCH:** So *you* say.

**JUSTINE:** His spirit...

**MORLOCK:** His shadow, certainly. And that's the problem, you see. The Grandfather's whole shadow is bound inside that knife. Anyone who tries to bond with it gets overpowered by the shadow, until there isn't a scintilla of their flesh left. Isn't it obvious?

**QUELCH:** You're making this up! You *always* make things up!

**MORLOCK:** Of course I'm not making it up! Take a look around you, woman! Look at the ghosts you've been making here! Anyone who takes the knife ends up on the wall!

**JUSTINE:** Not *anyone* -

**QUELCH:** Shut up. Listen to me, Morlock. I'm the one who's in charge of the rituals, not you. I'm the one who understands the bonding. Don't try to tell me how to use your bloody relics, or I'll -

**MORLOCK:** Stitch a penis to my head?

**QUELCH:** Your shadow's going to be nothing *but* penises!

**JUSTINE:** Not *anyone* who takes it.

**QUELCH:** What?

**JUSTINE:** I think... I know how someone can bond with the knife.

**QUELCH:** You? Hah!

**MORLOCK:** Oh, be quiet, Quelch. Go on, Justine. What did you want to say?

**JUSTINE:** If the Grandfather's shadow is in the knife -

**QUELCH:** Pff!

**JUSTINE:** - then it'll overwhelm anybody who takes it. Because nobody can have more than one shadow.

**QUELCH:** We're wasting time. Sabbath wants... **[Suddenly realizes what Justine is saying.]** No. No, she can't mean it. She can't.

**MORLOCK:** Carry on, Justine.

**JUSTINE:** Well, if anyone with a shadow will just get turned into a shadow, then we... I mean, you need...

**MORLOCK:** Someone without a shadow to begin with. Is that what you're suggesting?

**QUELCH:** No! No, I won't allow it!

**MORLOCK:** Something wrong, Godmother?

**QUELCH:** Isn't it obvious, you dribbling old idiot? She wants the knife for herself! She's after the Grandfather's blood!

**JUSTINE:** No, I -

**MORLOCK:** I thought you said I'd faked it?

**JUSTINE:** Please, I was just -

**QUELCH:** I won't let it happen, you hear me? I won't agree to the ritual. I won't let this... *failure* take the knife!

**JUSTINE:** But I wasn't trying to -

**MORLOCK:** Even so, Justine. It seems you're as qualified as anyone.

**JUSTINE [after a long, long pause]:** Godfather?

**QUELCH:** I won't allow it!

**MORLOCK:** Ignore her, Justine. You don't need her help to bond with a new weapon. You know that now.

**JUSTINE:** Please... I don't know. All of this is so sudden...

**MORLOCK:** It's your choice. As I said. You *are* qualified.

**JUSTINE [deep breath]:** I serve the House. I serve the family.

**MORLOCK:** Yes, I thought you'd say that. Give her the knife, Godmother Quelch.

**QUELCH:** You can't -

**MORLOCK [suddenly very intense]:** Give her. The knife.

**F/X:** A pause. Then Quelch slaps the knife down onto the altar.

**JUSTINE:** But what if I'm wrong? All I said was -

**MORLOCK:** You're a witch, Justine. You're not going to be wrong about something like this.

**QUELCH [quietly]:** She'll fail. She's failed before, she'll fail again.

**MORLOCK:** Go on, Justine. Reach out. That's right.

**JUSTINE:** I can't... I can't lift it...

**MORLOCK:** Yes you can. You know you can.

**JUSTINE:** It's so heavy...

**QUELCH:** This can't be happening. This is *obscene*.



**MORLOCK:** Why? Because you're not doing it for her? That's it, Justine. That's it. You're touching it. Holding it. Now. Let it become part of you. Take it into yourself. Let the Grandfather's shadow bond itself to you.

**JUSTINE:** So heavy...

**MORLOCK:** Take it, Justine. Take it now.

**QUELCH:** No!

**MORLOCK:** *Now!*

**F/X:** Justine cries out. At the same moment, there's an explosion of whispers in the hall; as if all those gathered here begin whispering at once, and reach a crescendo in a second. Then there's silence.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Exterior background.

**ELIZA:** The thing is... I can't talk for Parliament, okay? I mean, I'm just a Cousin, I've only been here about a year...

**RUTHVEN:** Of course. There are documents to be signed. Agreements to be drafted. We have a lot to discuss with Godfather Morlock.

**ELIZA:** Right.

**RUTHVEN [pointedly]:** When he gets here.

**LOLITA [crying out]:** *Ahhh!*

**F/X:** The baby starts wailing.

**ELIZA:** Is she okay?

**LOLITA [angry]:** What does it look like?

**RUTHVEN:** If there's something wrong, Lolita...

**LOLITA:** Didn't you feel it? Are you stupid or something?

**RUTHVEN:** I do apologise on Lolita's behalf, Cousin. She's rather sensitive.

**LOLITA:** How can you not feel that, you preening idiot? It just... **[Tails off. When she speaks again, she's more controlled, and gritting her teeth.]** I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me.

**F/X:** The baby calms down.

**ELIZA:** It's probably the city. It does that to you, the first time you come here.

**LOLITA [snapping]:** You think I don't know what - **{Regains control.}** I mean... of course. The city. That must be it.

**RUTHVEN:** We'll discuss this later, Lolita.

**LOLITA [again, through gritted teeth]:** Yes, my Lord.

**Fade.**

**F/X:** The ritual hall. The crowds are whispering, but only quietly.

**QUELCH:** Look at her. Look at her shadow...

**MORLOCK:** It's not her shadow any more. Is it?

**QUELCH:** What's her name again? Justine? Justine... can you hear me, girl?

**MORLOCK:** Not a girl. Not now.

**QUELCH:** Her shadow's only got one arm.

**MORLOCK:** No. It's got *all* the arms. The trouble is, we can only see one at a time.

**QUELCH:** What's that supposed to mean? **[No reply.]** She's not moving. Can she hear us?

**MORLOCK:** I don't know. **[Pause.]** Justine?

**F/X:** The background noise begins to fade. So does the voice of Morlock. It dissolves into echo.

**MORLOCK [fading]:** Cousin Justine?

**Fade.**

**F/X:** Closing music, with final voice-over.

**ELIZA:** I'll tell you what it is that makes the Great Houses different from us, okay? "Us" meaning "humans", this time. What makes them different is, they've got time running through their veins. It's like they're plugged into history, right down to the genes. They're born that way. You know what the stories say? The way the stories tell it, when the founder members of the Faction left their old Houses and joined the Grandfather... I'm trying to quote from memory here, all right, so don't take the piss... when they joined the Grandfather, the whole of space and time skipped a beat. Like the universe blinked or something. Because history knew things had got messed up, somewhere along the line. That's how the founder members lost their shadows. Their shadows got lost in the gap, and no, I

don't know how that's supposed to work either. But the point is, they had to start experimenting, just to get their shadows back. That's how they found out how to stick new shadows to themselves, and that's how they found out how to stitch weapons to them, like we used to back in the Empire. **[Pause.]** So, the next big question is: where does that leave Justine? How the hell did *she* end up where she did? Did the universe just keep blinking at her? Or what?

**Fade.**

**End titles..**